Butcher, were mustering in Syria, and it was necessary to anticipate them. Kleber was put at the head of twelve thousand men, and, after dispersing the eight hundred Mamelukes who had retreated in the direction of Rahmaniyeh, he advanced some days' march to El Arish, which was at once beset. Bonaparte tarried at Cairo for a few days, and then having learned that the congress at Rastadt was still sitting, and that war, though imminent, was not yet declared, set out, reaching El Arish on February seventeenth, 1799. Three days later the Turkish garrison, composed largely of volunteers, surrendered. They were paroled, and ordered to march toward Damascus. Gaza feU with the exchange of a few musket-balls, and important munitions of war were delivered into the hands of the French. On March fourth the invaders were before Jaffa, which had a garrison of four thousand men, a part of Jezzar's army. After three days' bombardment a breach was made in the walls, and two thousand troops who had taken refuge behind caravansary walls surrendered under promise of their lives; the rest, it is said, had been killed in a massacre which immediately followed the assault.

No French victory was ever marked by more unbridled license than that which the victorious troops practised at Jaffa. But what followed was worse. Although the prisoners of war were too numerous for the ordinary usage, yet they should have been treated according to the terms of quarter they had exacted. On the seventh a council of war unanimously voted that the old rule under which no quarter is given to defenders in an assault should be applied to them. For two days Bonaparte hesitated, but on the ninth his decision was taken. A few Egyptians were sent home, and the remainder of the prisoners, together with the eight